

The Society would welcome more information about the habits of this interesting and little known animal. Reliable first hand notes on its ecology and habits are badly needed.

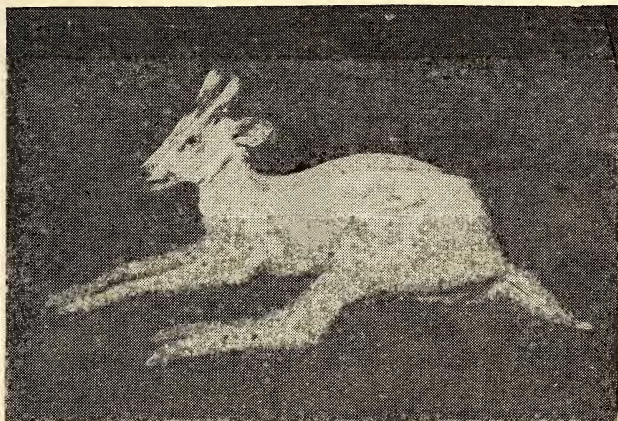
BOMBAY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY,
91, WALKESHWAR ROAD,
BOMBAY 6,
January 29, 1959.

EDITORS

6. AN ALBINO BARKING DEER

(With a photo)

Raja Chandra Chur Prasad Singh of Udaipur (Madhya Pradesh) sends us the accompanying photograph of an albino Barking Deer (*Muntiacus muntjak*) which he shot in February. He asks whether



'a similar trophy has been obtained by any sportsman'. In previous volumes of the *Journal* we find two records of albino muntjac, both from Nepal. With one of these a good photograph of the captured animal is reproduced (16: 742).

Other mammals in which either complete or partial albinism has been recorded in back numbers of the *Journal* are: Hog Deer (24: 588), Cheetal (35: 888), Sambar (40: 322), Blackbuck (16: 742), Gaur (36: 492, 985, 986; 37: 483), Goral (32: 373), and Tiger (24: 819; 32: 584).

Recorded in Vol. 16: 361, with photograph, is the much rarer case of a melanistic blackbuck from Bhopal, dark-coloured all over without the usual white belly and legs.

BOMBAY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY,
91, WALKESHWAR ROAD,
BOMBAY 6,
February 3, 1959.

EDITORS

7. COMMUNAL NEST-FEEDING IN BABBLERS

I have often noted more than two Jungle Babblers showing interest in building a single nest. As regards the situation when there are eggs in the nest, again I have many notes of about half a dozen, or even more, babblers protesting loudly close round me when I looked into a nest to view its contents. The clearest evidence that I have, however, of the communal interest of more than one pair of babblers in the same nest are two notes about the feeding of young birds in the nest. On May 24th last year (1957) I noted three different adult birds carrying food to the chicks in one nest; and on August 19th last year I noted four different adult birds taking food to the youngsters in another nest. In the latter case the four adults were all queued up—as I described in my talk to the Kashmir Nature Study Society—like a line of waiters bringing dishes to a group of diners.

In addition to the above, I have many notes of groups of four or six babblers staying close to fledglings after they have left their nest, bringing them food and generally looking after them. Sometimes only four adults seemed to be involved, but at other times at least five or six were concerned. I think it is probably always an even number, because the group is composed of pairs. I have even seen this company of adults attending a young Pied-crested Cuckoo and its young babbler foster-brother or sister—though the cuckoo had thrown all except the one other egg out of the nest!

I have no doubt that all this indicates that more than one pair of Jungle Babblers share the same nest; and I presume this means that the females of the pairs lay all their eggs in it.

With regard to Large Grey Babblers, four of them joined in building a nest in my garden last month. I am fairly certain from my observations that the two females both laid eggs in the nest, for I think they took it in turns to sit there. Unfortunately crows